[191] inhabit the mountainous districts near the 162 northeastern frontiers, constitute the largest 795 Moslem minority group. Racially and linguistically distinct, they make up about 15 to 20 per cent of the population. Other non-Arabic Moslem communities include about 50,000 each of Turkomans and Iranians, the majority of whom are also found in the northern provinces. Most of the Kurds and the Turkomans are Sunnites, but some adhere to minor heterodox sects; the Iranians are Shiites.

From 150,000 to 200,000 native Christians reside in Iraq. The Chaldeans, a sect which observes early Nestorian rites but owes allegiance to the Vatican, comprise the most numerous group. Other communities include some 30,000 Assyrians (Nestorians), refugees from Asia Minor in 1918, and smaller contingents belonging to the Armenian Orthodox, the Greek Orthodox, the Jacobite (Syrian Orthodox) and the Syrian 563 Catholic churches. Most of the Christian peoples live together in more or less separate ethnic and religious groups: about 70 per cent are settled in the northern provinces of Kirkuk, Mosul and Erbil, and a large proportion of the remainder in the cities of Baghdad and Basra. Prominent among other indigenous sects are the Yezidis, or so-called "devil-worshipers," about 30,000 of whom dwell in the districts near the Syrian border. A few thousand Sabians, famous as silver craftsmen, also live in Baghdad, Amarah and Basra.

191 Arabic is spoken by over three quarters of the population. Kurdish, Syriac and Turki, however, are recognized as official languages in limited areas in the north, while English is extensively used in the 593 larger cities. Although the Iraqi are pre- 162 dominantly Arabs, marked gradations in social structure are represented by the nomadic Bedouin tribes of the deserts, the "marsh Arabs" or primitive tribesmen of the Amarah and Hammar lakes region of the southern delta, the rural peasants and the townspeople. Up to 1950, the population included about 200,000 Jews, primarily of